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Future and Value: The Library as Strategic Partner

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Future and value

The Library as Strategic Partner

Antje Mays
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Presented November 8, 2018

Charleston Conference™
ISSUES IN BOOK AND SERIAL ACQUISITION



UK Libraries

About this Lively Session

- ◆ **Background research: a brief overview**

- ◆ Economic macrotrends: post-growth, saturation, stagnation theories
- ◆ Pressures on higher education: cost and access
- ◆ Library pressures: stagnant support & budgets post-recession

- ◆ **Interactive exercises, un-conference-style**

- ◆ Live poll & discussion

- ◆ **Takeaways for you and your home libraries:**

- ◆ Live poll compilations emailed to session participants,
- ◆ Conference paper: **<https://works.bepress.com/antjemays>**

Part 1

◆Background:

- ◆Broader economic trends
- ◆Higher education pressures
- ◆Library pressures
- ◆Professional impact & value

Winter is coming: economic macrotrends

- ◆ Post-growth, no growth, stagnation theories
- ◆ Technological saturation
- ◆ Evolution toward “medieval economy”:
 - ◆ → high-end niche markets
 - ◆ → low-tech service sector
- ◆ Pressures on higher education:
 - ◆ → cost, debt, access, value, returns
- ◆ Library pressures: budgets, value judgments



Economic winter: snowing on libraries

- ◆ Higher education access, cost, debt, value judgments
- ◆ Post-recession stagnation for library support & budgets
- ◆ Stakeholders' outdated library perceptions
- ◆ Value & ROI: mismatched & incomplete measures
- ◆ Negative prognoses
- ◆ Negative value judgments
- ◆ Impact on the profession: fear, uncertainty, dissatisfaction



Professions and value judgments

- ◆ **Financial industry** – negative global impact of poor judgment
 - ◆ Exotic investment instruments: securitized debt of shaky underlying value
 - ◆ Cascade of financial collapses → widespread economic harm
- ◆ Sentiment in the profession:
 - ◆ self-correct → instill values
 - ◆ emphasize ethics in business education

Professions and value judgments, ctd.

- ◊ **Library profession** – positive impact of trustworthy information services
 - ◊ Highly ranked among most trusted professions
 - ◊ Effective services provider → known for delivering what users need
 - ◊ Natural ally in widely-needed skill development
- ◊ Sentiment in the profession:
 - ◊ Negative self-image
 - ◊ Timid in recognizing own value

Trust and viable information

66%

agree that it is harder than
ever to find trustworthy
information.

84%

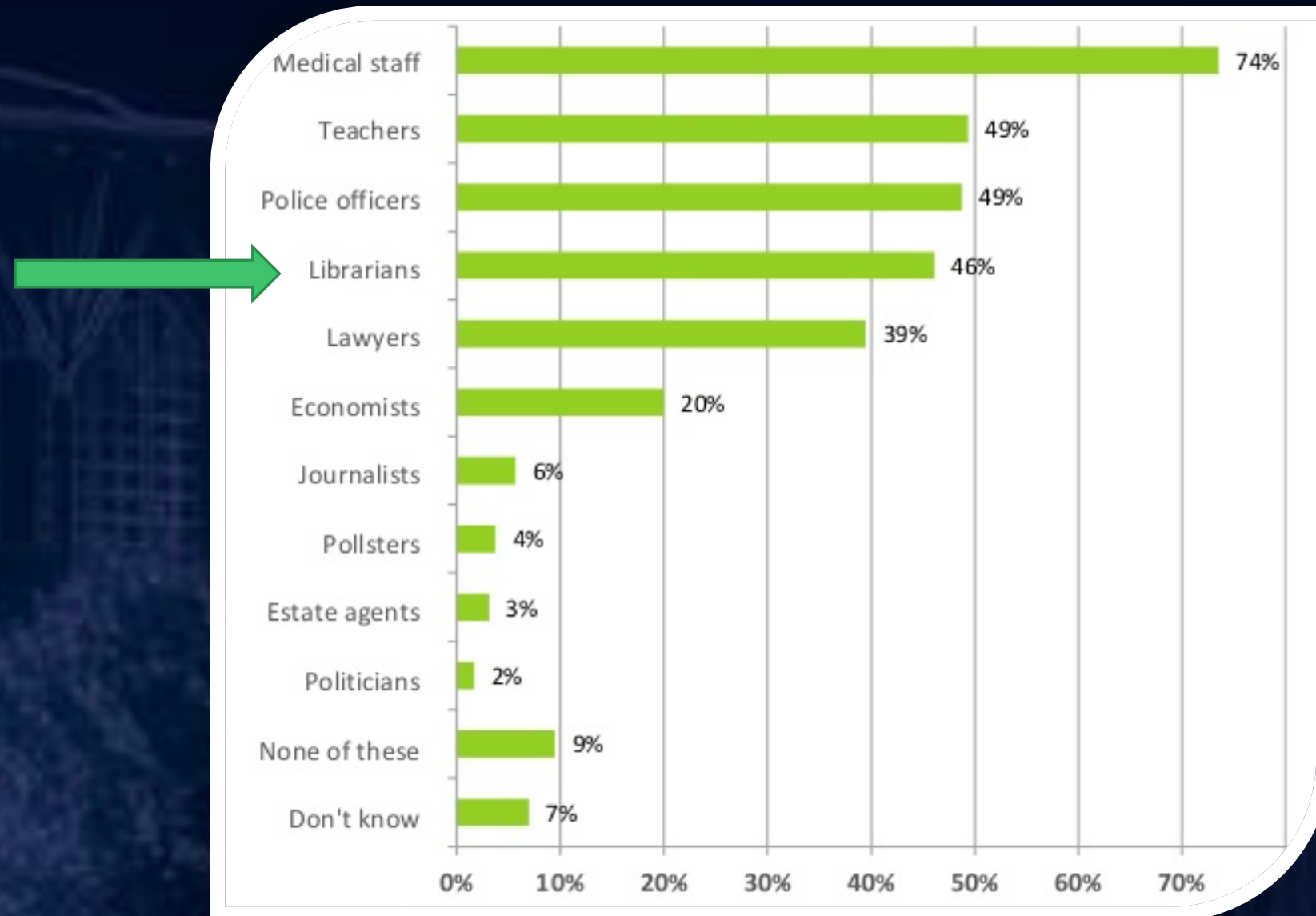
agree that they
trust information
more when it is
given by a
professional.

90%

agree that it is important to
educate people on how to find
trustworthy information.

Source: CILIP (2018). British survey of 2,000 adults.

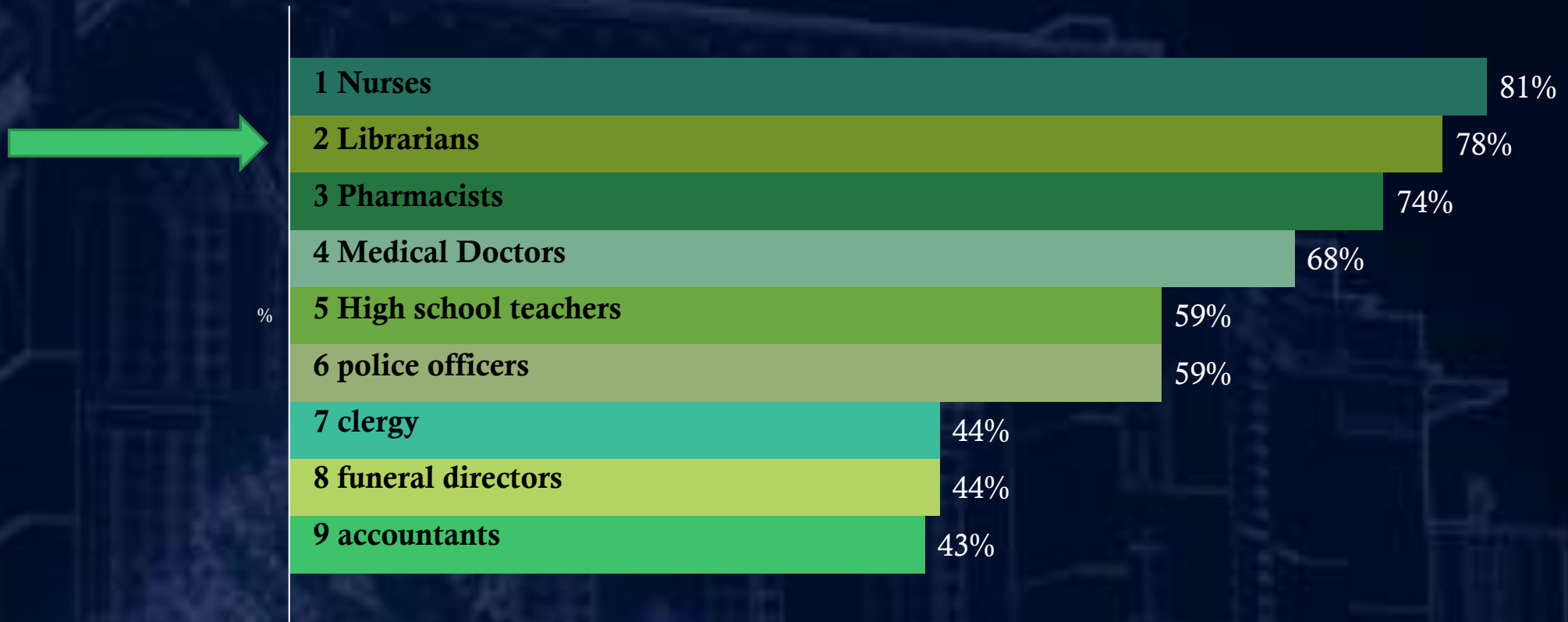
Most likely sources of trustworthy information



Source: CILIP (2018). British survey of 2,000 adults. High trust mirrored in USA in Geiger's (2017) Pew Research Center study.

Most trusted professions

➤ Librarians second only to nurses



Source: Lockwood & Ritter (2016). Maine State Library Trusted Professions Survey. (n=400)

A few positive strategies

- ◇ Soft-advocacy -- beyond fundraising -- through expertise
- ◇ Partner across obvious lines (campus, community)
- ◇ Community engagement → leverage expertise
- ◇ Engage with local business community
 - ◇ Skill development
 - ◇ Economic development
- ◇ Engage with professionals in other industries
- ◇ Look to other industries for creative solutions

Part 2

◆ Interactives:

- ◆ Mentimeter live polls

- ◆ Discussions

Interactive Reflections

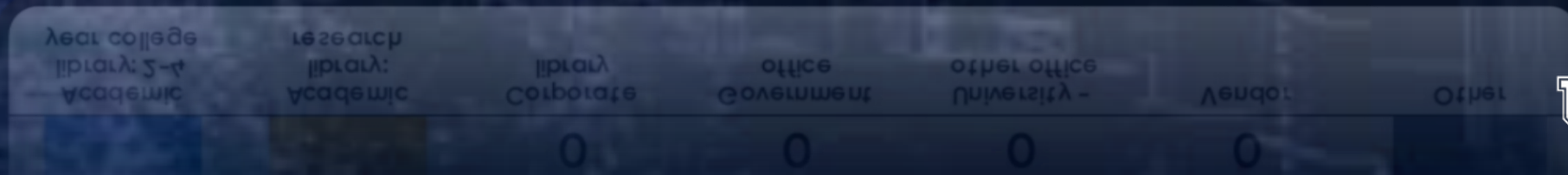
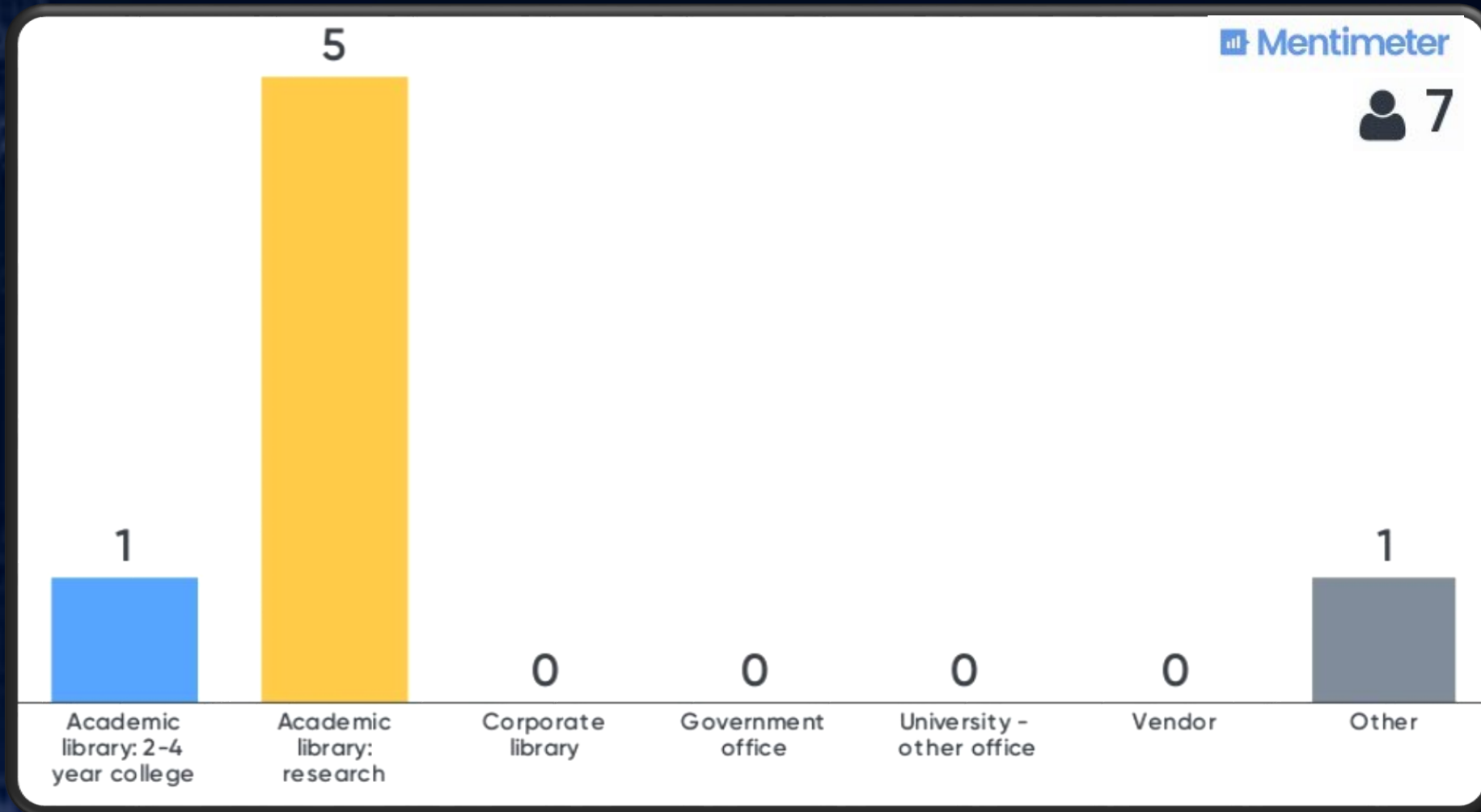
Live polls – 9 questions:

- ◆ **Basics:** organizations, roles – Q. 1-2
- ◆ **Library environments:** integration vs. isolation – Q.3-4
- ◆ **Information professions:** challenges & opportunities – Q.5-8
- ◆ **Closing thoughts:** open-ended – Q.9

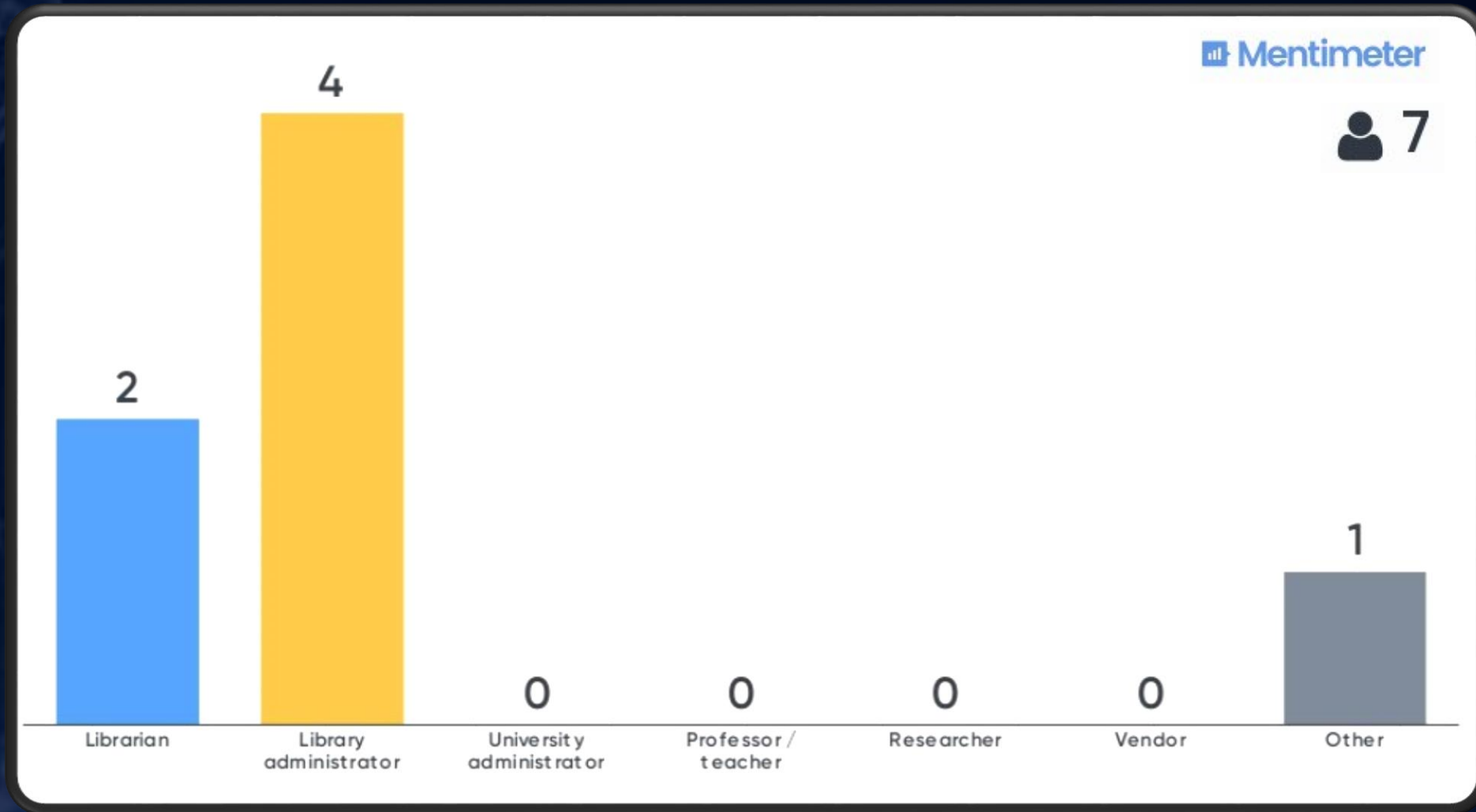
Interactive poll results:

- ◆ The next 9 slides show session participants' responses from the interactive Mentimeter live polls.

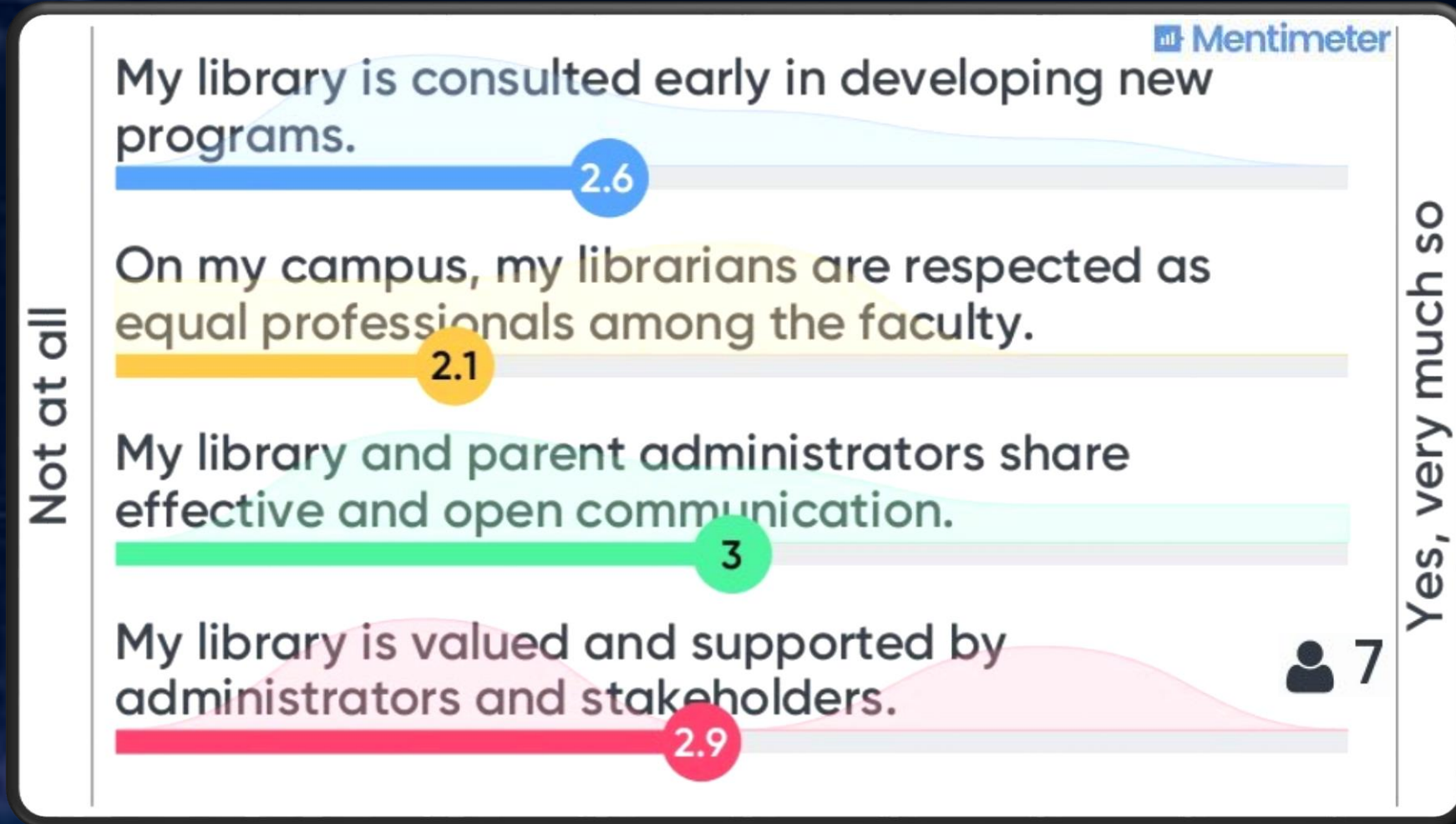
1. What type of organization are you with?



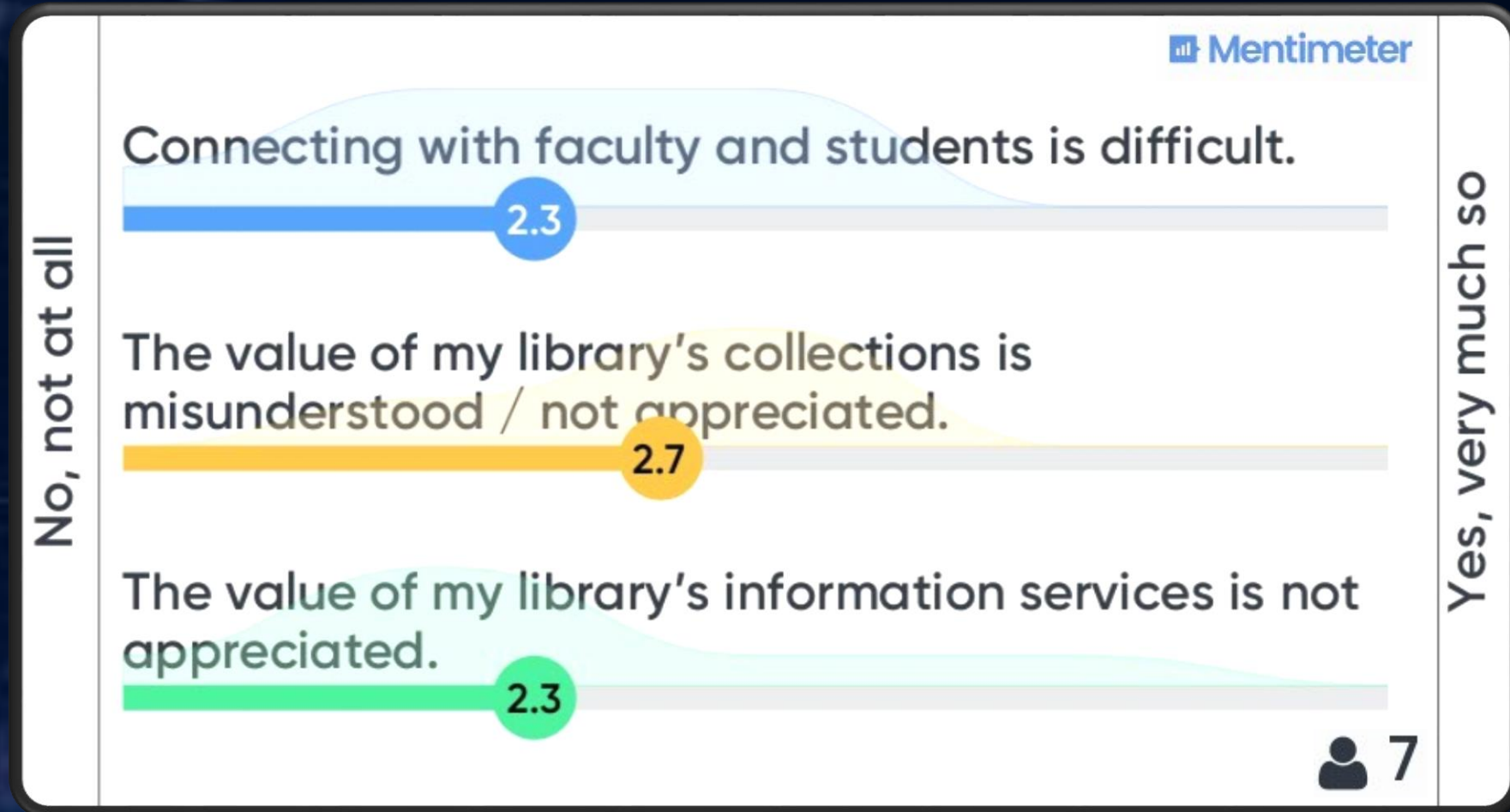
2. What is your role?



3. How integrated is your library in your broader organization and community?



4. How isolated is your library from the organization and broader community?



5. What key challenges do you see for library / information professionals?

Funding

Open access.

Budget is key

Finding new funding sources.
Communicating value.

DRM

Open access

Budget

Shifts in higher ed more broadly

Sustainability of scholarly communication

Faculty who don't require quality research = students who don't use the library. Resources are costing more and library budgets are shrinking.

 10

6. What great opportunities do you see for library / information professionals?

Moving into non-traditional areas and services

Potential for greater integration with research and scholarly communications lifecycles.

Credible source of reliable information in light of all the fake news

Data visualization services / moving into other service areas.

Better integration to community

Preserving social media networks for the historical record – beyond web archiving, preserving nodes and pathways.

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7. Society's unassigned problems: What needs are library professionals strongly suited to address?

Credible information sources

Combat dumbing down

Assistance to the broader campus community, including alumni and community members

Providing research support for non-profits and local governments.

8. Soft advocacy: What can library professionals do to be effective ambassadors for the profession?

Stop thinking of/communicating about libraries using technical jargon

Be open to hiring non-MLS employees to work in our libraries

Be service oriented. Help navigate our users through the complicated info-space

Take opportunities to always talk to non librarians

Show value by releasing statistics on services rendered and value added to programs and degrees. Collaboration with students on projects.

Show how our skill set can help most situations

Don't inflate what we do to non-traditional library users. Talk about libraries in a way that makes sense to the audience.

Establish partnerships with academic depts where possible

9. Your closing thoughts: free-form & open-ended

academic freedom be helpful
leadership disability outreach
digital services technology services
neoliberalism users where they are service outside
observe other industries
be responsive advocacy for new funding
empathy collaborate with others meet patrons
greater marketing corporate university
value-added not bound by legacy think creatively
publishing adaptive services
be flexible demonstrate value
analyze adaptable
crises

 15

Part 3

- ◆ **More background research:**
 - ◆ **Selected readings**

Additional Readings

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- ◆ Kuczera, M., & Field, S. (2013). *Skills beyond School: Review of the United States*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Additional Readings, ctd.

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- ◆ Palley, T. (2012). *From financial crisis to stagnation: The destruction of shared prosperity and the role of economics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Additional Readings, ctd.

- ◆ Rosa, Kathy. S., ed. (2018) *The State of America's Libraries 2018*. Chicago: American Library Association. Retrieved from <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018-soal-report-final.pdf>.
- ◆ Sigurjonsson, T., Arnardottir, O., Vaiman, A., & Rikhardsson, A. (2015). Managers' Views on Ethics Education in Business Schools: An Empirical Study. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 130(1), 1-13.
- ◆ Tenopir, Carol. (2010). Measuring the Value of the Academic Library: Return on Investment and Other Value Measures. *The Serials Librarian*, 58(1-4), 39-48.
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Questions?

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